



HARMONY OF MIND AND BODY: STUDY OF IMPORTANCE OF YOGA IN HUMAN LIFE

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the historical evolution, principles, and health implications of yoga, emphasizing its holistic approach to physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Tracing its roots from the Vedic period to modern times, the article outlines the eightfold path of yoga, emphasizing its integral role in spiritual development according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. The discussion on health benefits encompasses cardiovascular and respiratory fitness, mental well-being, and stress management. Methodologically, the review employs a systematic approach, utilizing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist. It includes diverse participants, interventions, and outcomes, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of systematic reviews related to yoga interventions.

KEYWORDS: Yoga, Health, Well-being, Therapeutic Effects

INTRODUCTION

A form of brain-body wellness known as yoga combines vigorous activity with an internally synchronized, deliberate focus on awareness of the breath, energy, and oneself (Collins, 1998). The teachings and exercises of yoga's healing framework are based on four fundamental principles (Desikachar et al., 2005). The fundamental tenet is that the human body is an all-encompassing element engaged in several interconnected measurements that are inseparable from one another, and that the health or illness of any one measurement affects other measurements. The second guideline states that, as each person is unique, their needs should be taken into consideration when drawing them closer and that their training should be tailored accordingly. The third guideline states that yoga empowers the student to cure themselves. Yoga integrates the student into the healing process; by taking on a contributing role in their journey towards health, the healing process occurs within rather than externally, and a stronger sense of independence is attained. The fourth rule states that a person's ability to heal depends on the state and nature of their mental health. Healing occurs more quickly when a person is in a favorable psychological state; healing may take longer if a person is in a negative mental state. Yoga is thought of as a kind of brain-body medicine that integrates a person's mental, physical, and spiritual aspects to enhance some aspects of wellbeing, particularly conditions linked to stress. (Atkinson and Permuth-Levine, 2009). There is evidence that hypertension, like other chronic illnesses and infections, contributes to the etiology of heart disease, cancer, and stroke (Granath et al., 2006). Given the manner in which stress is entangled with different illnesses, it is important to keep in mind that CEOs should focus on stress management and that negative, excited states should be reduced in order to minimize the burden of illness. Yoga is considered a kind of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) that reduces the body's pressure reaction by arranging physiological events

in a way that lessens the pressure reaction. The field of yoga's logical inquiry has grown significantly in recent years, and many clinical trials have been conducted to assess the benefits and effects of yoga therapy. Some of the most well-known reasons why people seek treatment with complementary therapies like yoga include psychological wellness concerns like tension, depression, anxiety, and lack of sleep (Pilkington et al., 2005). Yoga encourages relaxation, deep breathing, and attention to the here and now. This shifts the balance from the flight-or-battle response and the thoughtful sensory system to the parasympathetic framework and the unwinding reaction (McCall, 2007). The final one is calming and beneficial; it lowers blood pressure, respiration, and pulse, lowers cortisol levels, and increases blood flow to vital organs and the digestive system.^[1]

History of Development of Yoga

Yoga is the term for the traditional yoga system as presented in the Yoga Sutras by Patanjali. Including ethical disciplines (Yama and Niyama), postures (Asana), breathing exercises (Pranayama), control of the senses (Pratyahara), concentration (Dharana), meditation (Dhyana), and absorption (Samadhi), Patanjali taught an eightfold (astanga) system of yoga emphasizing integral spiritual development. This makes up a comprehensive and essential system of spiritual instruction. In India, yoga has been a component of men's endeavors for greater spiritual accomplishments. The history of Yoga is divided into five categories:

1. Vedic period

The world's oldest scriptures are the ancient Vedic books. Veda means "knowledge" and k means "praise" in Sanskrit. As such, the Rigveda is a collection of hymns praising a supreme being. The Yajur Veda (knowledge of Yajna), the Sama Veda (knowledge of chanting), and the Atharva Veda (knowledge

of worldly matters provided by the teacher Atharva) are the other three Vedas. During the Vedic era, it was believed that the key to achieving greater enlightenment was knowledge, which was given to sages through meditation and disclosed by the universe. It is composed of three yogas: Mantra Yoga, which uses the power of mantras to activate them as a tool for mental transformation; Prana Yoga, which energizes the life force through pranayama. Dhyana Yoga: The term “dhyāna,” or meditation, is derived from the word “dhī,” which denotes intellect or Buddhi. The higher and internal part of the mind (manas) that allows us to see the everlasting truth is called dhī. The core idea of yoga, vedanta, and Buddhism is the cultivation of dhī or buddhi, the primary faculty of discrimination. Contemplation involves focusing the thoughts on one thing. “The state of contemplation is when the mental faculties (manas) remain without any external object and the tendencies of the concentrated mind start to flow around a single notion like an unbroken stream of oil.” Dhyana has five characteristics: easy expansion, effortlessness, slowness, wakefulness, and single thought. Any mental state that possesses these five traits qualifies as Dhyana. The six limbs of yoga, or Sadanga-Yoga, are described as follows in the Maitrayan Upanisad:

1. breath control (pranayama),
2. withdrawal of senses (pratyahara),
3. meditation (dhyana),
4. concentration (dharana),
5. recalling and examination (tarka), and
6. transcendental state (samadhi).

2. Pre-classical period

Written in 5000 B.C., the Bhagavad-Gita is one of the greatest texts in yoga. The Bhagavadgita states that there are four ways to have a relationship with the Absolute. These have been named the Yoga of flawless actions (Karma Yoga), the Yoga of perfect devotion (Bhakti Yoga), the Yoga of perfect knowledge (Jina Yoga), and the Yoga of willpower (Raja Yoga). There are eighteen chapters in the Bhagavadgita. Every chapter is known as yoga. Every chapter offers highly detailed yoga that explains how to realize the ultimate truth and how to get there. The Bhagavadgita provides detailed information on the meaning of life, the immortality of the soul, and our enduring bond with the Almighty. This knowledge applies to each and every one of us without exception.

3. Classical period

Patanjali composed the 196 aphorisms that make up the Yoga Sutra during the ancient era, in the second century BCE. These aphorisms explain the eight steps (Astanga) that lead to the ultimate aim of human life, which is liberation from the suffering of birth and death. This is called Astanga Yoga, Raja Yoga, or the Yoga of Willpower. (Detailed explanations are provided in Section 1.5 of this unit below.) A few centuries before this time, the Buddha taught us the eightfold path, which focused mostly on meditation. Among the oldest forms of meditation practiced in India is called vipasana. Over two and a half millennia ago, Gautama, the Buddha, brought it back to life for humanity. “Vipasana” means “observing reality as it is.” It is a method of self-purification through introspection. To focus the mind, one starts by observing their natural breathing. One

experiences the universal realities of the mortal and unpleasant life and continues to watch the changing nature of body and mind with heightened awareness. Two of the main pillars of yoga in Jainism are pratyahara and cintana, or contemplation.

4. Yoga in Medieval Times

The subcontinent as a whole had been introduced to meditation by Buddha, who lived in the sixth century B.C. There was some debate, though, about the idea that one cannot begin spiritual practices like meditation right away. It is necessary to become ready for meditation. When Buddhism’s prominence began to wane in the sixth century A.D., notable Yogis like Goraksanatha and Matseyendranatha set out to cleanse the system. During this period, numerous treatises on Hatha Yoga were written. The primary works composed in this era include Svātmanāma’s Hatha Yoga Pradīpikā, Gheraṇḍa Samhitā, a conversational treatise, Śrīnīvaṣa Yogi’s Hatharatnaṭal, which addresses Ayurveda in addition to Yoga, Śiva Samhitā, Nityānātha’s Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati, and others. The Nātha Sampradāya is credited to Guru Goraksanatha as its founder, and it is said that the 84 Siddhas and the nine Nathas are human forms that were formed as yogic manifestations to propagate the teachings of yoga and meditation throughout the world. They were yogis who taught humanity about samadhi. It is said that Guru Goraksanatha wrote various writings, such as Yoga Cintamani, Gorakṣa Gītā, and Gorakṣa Samhitā.

5. Yoga in Modern Times

Śrī Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga, also known as Pūrṇa Yoga, placed a strong emphasis on opening up to the Divine and submitting to it in order to allow it to transform one’s existence. Śrī Ramakrishna Paramahansa describes the Divine love and Bhakti Yoga path. All faiths, according to Ramakrishna, are revelations of God in all of His facets, fulfilling the many needs of the human intellect. A significant impact of Śrī Ramakrishna on contemporary society is his advocacy for religious unity.

6. Astang Yoga or Raja Yoga

The eight-limbed Patanjali Yoga is also known as Astanga. These are the following: Asana, Dharmā, Dhyana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Yama, Niyama, and Samadhi. Yoga is not only a physical practice. It is a rich philosophical path and a way of life. In addition, the ten sensible principles known as the yamas (restraints) and niyamas (observances) offer guidance on how to live a happier and healthier life while integrating spiritual awareness into social interactions. They are for you to consider and deliberate about with a clear head, since the practice of yoga is about discovering your own truth and becoming connected to it, not blindly adhering to laws that are imposed from without.^[2]

Health Benefits of Yoga

It is less certain how beneficial yoga is to health in terms of disease risk and how it helps manage chronic illnesses. Research has examined the physiological reactions elicited by practicing yoga in contrast to more traditional kinds of physical activity. Some studies have demonstrated that the heart rate response to regular yoga sessions in healthy people at normal ambient temperatures is comparable to low-intensity walking exercise. This level of exercise is not sufficient to support cardiovascular

fitness and overall health at the current recommended level. However, contradictory results have been found in other research involving healthy adults, indicating that higher levels of cardiovascular stress were observed during yoga sessions. Additionally, some (but not all) studies in healthy people have shown improvements in indicators of cardio-metabolic health after yoga practice programs. Numerous single-group (uncontrolled) studies have shown improvements in blood cholesterol profile, maximal oxygen capacity, muscle strength, flexibility, and reduced physiological effort at sub-maximal exercise intensities. They have also reported lower levels of perceived exertion at maximal exercise capacity.

These changes in cardio metabolism imply that yoga can induce a high enough degree of cardiopulmonary stress to have positive health effects enhanced respiratory inspiratory and expiratory pressures, as well as enhanced visual and auditory reaction times and reduced weight gain in overweight persons, have all been linked to yoga practice in healthy participants. Even though some studies (Blumenthal and colleagues, for example) have found no improvement in cardiopulmonary variables following yoga practice programs, the actual level of physical exertion experienced during a session, and therefore the stimulus for cardio metabolic adaptations, is likely to be strongly influenced by the type of yoga, the practitioner's level of experience, and the ambient temperature during the session. In addition to the physical benefits, yoga has a spiritual component and breathing techniques that are uncommon in other types of exercise.^[3]

The main goals of "Yoga in human Life" are

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Social Health
- Spiritual Health
- Self- Realization or realization of the Divine within us

These goals are attained by

- Love and help for all living beings
- Respect for life, protection of nature and the environment
- A peaceful state of mind
- Full vegetarian diet
- Pure thoughts and positive lifestyle
- Physical, mental and spiritual practices
- Tolerance for all nations, cultures and religions

Advantages of yoga

1. Help to decrease the weight.
2. Yoga can improve focus.
3. It can expand our expiratory fitness levels.
4. It can expand our digestive fitness levels.
5. Provide an all-encompassing methodology towards your welfare.
6. Increased adaptability.
7. Help in evacuation of poisons in the form & support in relaxations.
8. Massaging the form's interior organs.
9. Toning the muscles.
10. Yoga can expand your respiratory fitness levels.
11. It can expand our circulatory fitness levels.

12. Increased grease of joints, ligaments and tendons.

Health and happiness in the age of stress

As it is, many Westerners, moving through a world of constant distress, feel that the framework is unreal, distant, and unsupportable due to the long history of yoga, the numbness of its actual nature, and the symbolic, indefinite quality of a large portion of the compositions about the subject. They make a serious mistake by doing this, as yoga is one of the most practical ways to achieve happiness and health in a stressful situation. We shouldn't encourage those alarmists who believe that human progress should be stopped and that we should revert to the prehistoric levels of development reached by cavemen. It will guide us toward a life free from stress. The harnessing of the forces of nature, such as nuclear energy and power, to enable us to travel faster than the speed of sound and explore space are incredible achievements and victories for man in his conquest of the cosmos. Nevertheless, occasionally he is inclined to forget that he is a living being rather than a machine. Millions of people in the West live at such an insane speed that they are committing mild suicide. Weights and strains unknown to our grandparents are imposed by progress. The only efficient way for man to deal with this challenge is to carefully evaluate his mental and physical health. Yoga provides an answer to the push dilemma. The positions give muscles more definition and firmness. Through yoga, one's temperament becomes more serene and their brain becomes more peaceful. One attends to the feelings. That is the rationale for reducing stress; we should adopt a yoga lifestyle.

Some yogic asanas with their benefits to physical fitness Shavasana (Corpse pose)

Profits

- Returns cardiovascular flow to typical
- Slows heart rate, decreases pulse
- Teaches complete unwinding
- Stills and centres the brain Pashimottanasana (Head to knee pose) Profits Head to knee posture assists offset glucose levels and the metabolism.
- Improves adaptability of sciatic nerve and ankle, knee and hip joints
- Increases adaptability of the trapezes, deltoid, erectus femora's and biceps
- Stretches and reinforces pelvic support, hip joints, bear joints and
- Mobilizes joints and expands versatility in the lumbar spine
- Strengthens and extends the hamstrings
- Improves focus and mental continuance Tad asana (Tree pose) Profits Assists to remedying terrible carriage
- Increases hip and knee adaptability and portability
- Stretches spine
- Releases stomach tension
- Relieves lower back torment
- Tightens gluteus muscles^[4]

Therapeutic effects of yoga and its ability to increase quality of life.

Using a university computer browser, databases were searched

using Google Scholar to find research studies and interventions that looked at the therapeutic benefits of yoga. Using the advanced search feature, the terms “yoga” and “therapeutic effects” were first added to the database. The purpose of this search was to find broad information in the body of existing literature about the therapeutic benefits of yoga. A second search was then carried out using the following keywords or exact phrases: “chronic disease,” “stress,” “anxiety, depression,” “hatha yoga,” and “therapeutic effects of yoga.” The following criteria were used for including studies in this paper:

- The article had to be peer reviewed;
- It had to be published between the years 1990 and 2009;
- The intervention had to incorporate some form of yoga and/or meditation;
- The effects of yoga on some outcomes were measured.

A number of procedures were used in the selection of the papers that make up this manuscript. The title was read first. The article was saved to a folder if it seemed relevant to the analysis of yoga’s therapeutic effects. We selected the papers that described yoga-based therapies to be further reviewed because they addressed specific health outcomes. After that, every selected article was carefully read and evaluated. The articles that were selected cover a wide range of yoga’s uses, advantages, and therapeutic effects.^[5]

METHODS

To help you navigate the reported features of this investigation, we have created a Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist (Appendix A in Supplementary Material). For this investigation, there is no registered or published protocol.

Types of studies

For the purposes of this study, we considered systematic reviews of RCTs of yoga to be studies that

- sought to comprehensively identify relevant RCTs on a yoga-focused research question,
- stated inclusion criteria for the studies,
- searched at least one electronic database, and
- reported the critical appraisal of the included studies.

Reviews were not required to undertake a meta-analysis or even try to perform one, nor were they required to limit the evidence to RCTs. Completed systematic reviews as well as protocols for systematic reviews that detailed inclusion criteria, search strategies, and critical appraisal plans were included. Unless the title or abstract made it obvious that the study was a systematic review and it satisfied the four requirements listed above, we did not include overviews, umbrella reviews, scoping reviews, narrative reviews, or integrative reviews. With the exception of reviews that were only available as abstracts, we did not impose any restrictions on review eligibility based on language, date, or publication type. This was because abstracts usually provide very little information. We regarded the record of the most recent journal publication as the primary record when reviews had several linked records.

Types of participants

All forms of participant studies were eligible for systematic reviews. We did not impose any age, sex, or health-related restrictions on participants’ participation.

Types of interventions and comparisons

Reviews that indicated that “yoga” was the intervention of interest were included, regardless of the style or particular aspect of yoga practiced. We didn’t limit our inclusion to publications that utilized certain terminology, such as “yoga therapy,” because we wanted to take a comprehensive approach to the use of yoga for health. 16 The systematic reviews did not impose any limitations on the kind of comparisons that may be made; comparisons between yoga and other forms of yoga or any other active or inactive intervention might be included. Only when yoga was specifically mentioned as one of the interventions of interest in the research question or when the term “yoga” appeared in a reported search strategy were systematic reviews of a class of interventions—such as exercise or mind-body therapies—eligible. While the identification of trials does not always imply systematic or comprehensive identification, we included reviews based on the research topic and search technique rather than the retrieval of yoga experiments.

Types of outcomes

Systematic reviews were considered eligible if they explicitly declared their intention to evaluate the impact of yoga treatments on a health condition or outcome, encompassing physical, cognitive, or emotional aspects linked to the prevention, treatment, or risk of any health state.^[6]

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper consolidates the rich heritage of yoga with contemporary research, highlighting its profound impact on human well-being. By addressing physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, yoga emerges as a holistic approach to health. The synthesis of historical wisdom and systematic reviews underscores the versatility and therapeutic potential of yoga. As we navigate modern challenges, understanding and embracing yoga’s multifaceted benefits may pave the way for enhanced overall wellness. The synthesis of historical wisdom and contemporary research underscores yoga’s versatility and therapeutic potential. By addressing various dimensions of human health, yoga emerges as a holistic and accessible lifestyle choice. As individuals seek comprehensive well-being in the face of modern challenges, embracing yoga may offer a profound and sustainable path toward enhanced physical, mental, and spiritual wellness.

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